

**Security Council**

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8016th meeting of the Security Council, held on 2 August 2017, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned over the political situation in Burundi, the lack of implementation of resolution 2303 (2016) and the lack of engagement by the Government of Burundi in that regard. While noting that the security situation in the country has remained generally calm, it remains alarmed by the increasing numbers of refugees outside the country and disturbed by reports of torture, forced disappearances and extra-judicial killings, as well as by the persisting political impasse in the country and the attendant serious humanitarian consequences.

"The Security Council stresses that the situation prevailing in Burundi has seriously undermined the significant gains achieved through the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement of 28 August 2000 (the Arusha Agreement), with devastating consequences for Burundi and the region as a whole. The Security Council underscores its deep concern regarding the continued worsening of the humanitarian situation, marked by nearly 202,000 internally displaced persons, 3 million people in need and more than 416,000 Burundians seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, and commends the host countries for their efforts, and calls upon governments in the region to respect their international obligations relating to the status of refugees, and to ensure that their return is voluntary, based on informed decisions and in safety and dignity.

"The Security Council strongly condemns all public statements, coming from in or outside the country, that incite violence or hatred towards different groups in Burundian society, including calls for forced impregnation of women and girls. It welcomes the condemnation of such statements by CNDD FDD officials and calls on the Government of Burundi to ensure that those responsible for such acts are held accountable. It strongly urges the Government of Burundi and all parties to cease and reject any kind of violence and condemn any public statement inciting violence or hatred, and demands that all sides in Burundi refrain from any action that would threaten peace and stability in the country and may affect regional stability in the long run, or undermine the East African Community-led, African Union-endorsed inter-Burundian dialogue. It reiterates its intention to pursue targeted measures



against all actors, inside and outside Burundi, who threaten the peace and security of Burundi.

"The Security Council commends regional efforts to help Burundians find political solutions and reiterates its support to the facilitation led by former President Benjamin Mkapa under the mediation of President Yoweri Museveni, in his capacity as Chair of the East African Community (EAC). The Security Council welcomes the decision of the African Union (AU) at its 29th summit, which reaffirms the AU's commitment to the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Burundi through the rapid launching of an inclusive inter-Burundian dialogue, under the aegis of the EAC, with the support of the AU, and which requests all the Burundian stakeholders to participate actively and unconditionally in this process. It further stresses that this dialogue is the only viable process for a sustainable political settlement in Burundi. The Security Council remains deeply concerned over the lack of progress in this dialogue. The Security Council welcomes the report by facilitator Mkapa to the 20 May EAC summit and calls for the immediate implementation of the roadmap on the way forward. The Security Council stresses the urgent need for active engagement of the EAC member States for the regional mediation, facilitated by Benjamin Mkapa, to be continued and to succeed. The Security Council urges all Burundian stakeholders to take further measures to overcome the current political impasse.

"The Security Council underlines the utmost importance of respecting the letter and the spirit of the Arusha Agreement, which has helped to sustain a decade of peace in Burundi.

"The Security Council urges the Government of Burundi to reengage with international partners, especially the United Nations, in a constructive manner based on mutual trust. In that regard, the Security Council welcomes the visit of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Burundi and the full cooperation of the government of Burundi during his visit. It reiterates its full support to the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy in their efforts to engage the Government of Burundi on the modalities of the implementation of resolution 2303 (2016), in accordance with established United Nations practice, and to help overcome the current political impasse and foster an inclusive reconciliation process.

"The Security Council calls on the Secretary General and the Government of Burundi to finalize and implement the status of the Mission Agreement for the Office of the Special Envoy. The Security Council reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to enhance the United Nations engagement in Burundi, with a view to strengthening and supporting the team of the Special Envoy, in order to work with the Government of Burundi and other concerned stakeholders to support the EAC-led inter-Burundian dialogue and in the areas of security and rule of law, to engage with all stakeholders to the crisis, and work with all Burundian parties to develop confidence-building measures, to improve the human rights and security situation, and foster an environment conducive to political dialogue.

"The Security Council calls upon the Special Envoy to work with the government and civil society to support women's full and equal participation in the inclusive EAC-led dialogue, and further calls for the full and equal participation of women in decision-making at the national and local level, as well as for the engagement of women organizations in any humanitarian action or initiatives aimed at violence reduction and early warning, taking into account the vulnerability of forcibly displaced women.

"The Security Council strongly condemns all violations and abuses of human rights in Burundi, whoever perpetrates them, including those involving extra-judicial killings, sexual violence, arbitrary arrests and detentions; including those concerning children, forced disappearances, acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman and/or degrading treatment, harassment and intimidation of civil society, including women's organizations, and journalists, restriction of fundamental freedoms, as well as indiscriminate use of grenade attacks, including against civilians.

"The Security Council reiterates its regret at the decision by the Government of Burundi to suspend all cooperation and collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR), which has been present in the country since 1995 to strengthen Burundi's rule of law institutions, and calls for a swift solution through dialogue between OHCHR and the Government in order to enable OHCHR to fully resume its activities, including its monitoring and reporting functions, and fulfil its mandate. It notes that OHCHR responded to the Government of Burundi on 8 March 2017 regarding revisions to the draft memorandum of understanding between the Republic of Burundi and the United Nations concerning the updated terms for the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights in Burundi sent by OHCHR in November 2016 and urges the Government of Burundi and OHCHR to swiftly finalize the agreement without further delay.

"The Security Council reiterates its concern over the significant delays in the deployment of the AU human rights observers and military experts, noting that only 40 human rights observers and 8 military observers have been deployed to Burundi so far. It supports the AU call for the rapid signing of the Memorandum of Understanding relating to the activities of the human rights observers and the military experts of the AU, which will allow the AU human rights observers and military experts to fully operate in the country in fulfilment of their mandated responsibilities.

"The Security Council reaffirms the primary responsibility of the Government of Burundi for ensuring security in its territory and protecting its population, with respect for the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law, as applicable. It urges the Government of Burundi to respect, protect and guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, in line with the country's constitution and its international obligations, to adhere to the rule of law, to bring to justice and hold accountable all those responsible, including members of the security forces and violent actors affiliated to political parties, for crimes involving violations of international humanitarian law or violations and abuses of human rights, as applicable, including those involving sexual violence and all violations and abuses against children. The Security Council further calls on the Government of Burundi to cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi mandated under Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/33/24. The Security Council acknowledges the pardon of more than 1,000 prisoners in 2017, with political detainees among them, and calls for further confidence-building measures.

"The Security Council reaffirms the importance of maintaining up-to-date United Nations and AU contingency planning, consistent with resolution 2248 (2015), 2279 (2016) and 2303 (2016), to enable the international community to respond to any further deterioration of the situation.

"The Security Council remains concerned about the humanitarian and human rights situation in the country and calls on the Secretary-General to continue to sustain United Nations humanitarian assistance in support of the

Burundian population. It further notes that a number of bilateral and multilateral partners have suspended their financial and technical assistance to the Government of Burundi, considering the situation in Burundi, and encourages bilateral and multilateral partners and the Government of Burundi to continue their dialogue with a view to creating conducive conditions for the resumption of the assistance.

"In this context, the council welcomes the active engagement of the PBC as a viable platform for dialogue between Burundi and its partners, and further welcomes in this regard the socioeconomic retreat held in Bujumbura on 12 July 2017 with a view to assessing the socioeconomic aspects of the situation and agree on concrete steps to make cooperation more efficient and overcome existing obstacles.

"The Security Council also calls on States in the region to contribute to a solution to the crisis in Burundi, and to refrain from supporting the activities of armed movements in any way, and recalls in this regard commitments of the States in the region under the Framework agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region and the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees.

"The Security Council expresses concerns about information contained in reports to the Security Council regarding recruitment and training of Burundian refugees present on DRC territory.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of coordinating efforts between the African Union, the East African Community, the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and the United Nations, including the Special Envoy of the Secretary General, to continue to seek solutions to the crisis in Burundi.

"The Security Council acknowledges the contribution of Burundians peacekeepers serving in UN and African Union-led peacekeeping operations and reiterates the importance of upholding the standards of the United Nations.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity of Burundi.

"The Security Council notes its expectation that elections scheduled for 2020 in Burundi will be free, fair, transparent, peaceful, fully inclusive, with the participation of all political parties, and will ensure the full and equal participation of women throughout the process. It also underlines that considerable improvements to the political and human rights situation, in particular regarding fundamental freedoms, including for freedom of the press, and progress on reconciliation are necessary to enable credible elections.

"The Security Council recalls its request to the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the situation in Burundi every three months, to be reviewed after one year, including on any public incidents of incitements to hatred and violence, and changes to the situation on the ground, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to provide written reports immediately to the Security Council, as necessary, on grave security incidents, violations of international humanitarian law and violations or abuses of human rights, as applicable, of which the United Nations in Burundi has knowledge, whoever perpetrates them.

"The Security Council requests that the Secretary-General identifies options for enhancing the United Nations involvement in Burundi and developing mutual confidence-building measures between the Government of

Burundi and the United Nations, with a view to strengthening the team of the Special Envoy, enabling the full resumption of OHCHR activities and fulfilment of its mandate, ensuring the full deployment of authorized AU human rights observers and military experts, and other measures that could improve the political climate, promote trust-building among Burundian stakeholders, and create space for dialogue.

"The Security Council is determined to continue to closely follow the situation in Burundi, including progress in the implementation of resolution 2303 (2016)."